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## Public attitude to the migrants in Russia (Basing the example of Tatarstan Republic)

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### Abstract

Migration as a social phenomenon attracts attention in times of crisis, in moments of social tension. The problem of migration has become urgent for Russia in the past 10-15 years. Basing scientific evidence, the authors concluded that the problem of labor migration in general is perceived with anxiety almost by half of the population of the Republic of Tatarstan as a subject of the Russian Federation. The inhabitants of Tatarstan Republic feel the wariness towards the migrants. According to the results of research, less than half of the respondents were not against the temporary residence of the migrants, a small part believes that the regulations in this question should be based on the principles of assimilation and a fifth proportion of residents insists on the prohibition of the migrants entry to Russia. Regarding the problem of the migration we can't talk about the openness of the society, and also the authorities don't feel responsibility to create certain conditions for the migrants integration.

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*Keywords:* migration, phenomenon, scientific evidence.

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### Introduction

Migration as a social phenomenon attracts attention in times of crisis, in moments of social tension. Migration in socially successful society often is not noticed; moreover, the presence of migrants testifies the social well being. However, if the socio-economical situation becomes worse, it is possible to notice that the attitude towards the migrants changes. The problem of migration has become urgent for Russia in the past 10-15 years. This is primarily linked with the collapse of the USSR, the formation of a new nation-States with strong ethnic component and with the so - called «parade of sovereignties». Such a new category of population appeared as the refugees and migrants. At first time, the attitude to the new coming migrants was very nice, regardless of ethnic origin. Difficult to say that if it could be explained by the «spirit of proletarian internationalism» or by common humanity against the «era of primitive capital accumulation». At the present stage, the situation is different: the flow

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of migrants to Russia is not reducing, on the contrary, it is growing; most often the migrants are coming from the republics of the former USSR - Moldova, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan; and also from China and Vietnam. We can distinguish two main groups: labor migrants (usually temporary) and immigrants - immigrants for permanent residence. In the focus of the above-mentioned study was the labor migration of the middle and lower classes. The representatives of the upper classes of labor migration are practically absent because of social status; therefore the public opinion regarding these cases is not expressed.

Behavior of the migrants in the new social environment forms the attitude to them. Migrants can either assimilate or stay in isolation. In the first case, the behavior of the assimilated migrants causes less tension because they demonstrate the conformist behavior; recognize the values and norms of the titular ethnic group or groups. In case of insulating behavior of migrants they reject the values and norms of the titular group. Such behavior causes more tension and dissatisfaction of the representatives of the titular ethnic group. One of the most important indicators is the language. Language is the basis of the identity of any ethnic group, so the possession, as well as a desire to learn the language demonstrates the integration of the migrants into society. Integration of the migrant workers to the society is complicated due to the language barrier. This problem causes the distrust of local population towards «outsiders», on the other hand, it leads to the insecurity of the migrants - in disputable situations they cannot adequately present their interests and protect their rights. Even if we don't talk about the next «revival of nationalism», in the Russian mass media one may notice the reports concerning the extremist escapades of nationalist-minded bullies when the representatives of ethnic minorities are attacked, and usually they differ from the representatives of the titular ethnic group because of their language and appearance. Working places are occupied by the immigrants from the «near Abroad». Although most often they occupy professional niches not claimed by the representatives of the titular ethnic groups, the active presence of migrants on the labor market causes real tension. In this sense the situation with the shutdown of the Cherkizovskiy market in Moscow is illustrative. It was one of the largest markets of Eastern Europe, which existed since the beginning of the 1990s till 2009 and occupied the territory of over 200 hectares. According to the data of «Federation of migrants of Russia», more than 100 000 people were working in the market. According to the data of chamber of Commerce of the Russian Federation, around 60 000 traders from this number were from China. After the market closed, most suffered group in the economical sense were Chinese, who, due to their weak integration could not adequately react to the changing situation and protect their interests (for example, to move to a different market and continue working). It must be noted, that there was no negative reaction of the local population on the infringement of the interests of the migrants. Currently the situation with the markets in Moscow is far from resolution.

In 2013 the subject of public and political discourse became the criminal migrants, and a number of facts have reinforced the negative perception of this social group. In October 2013, the migrant (presumably from Azerbaijan) made the resonant murder of a local resident, followed by mass protests on the interethnic grounds. People-speakers demanded to close the vegetable warehouse located in this area, which employed a large number of foreign workers, as well as to tighten immigration law. Then a nation-wide campaign followed for identification of the undocumented migrants and toughening of measures for their punishment.

Public reaction to the event was rather contradictory: there were both typically nationalistic judgments and such explanations that the conflict was caused by the murder, but nationalists used this event that declared themselves as a socially and politically significant group. In winter 2013 in Naberezhnye Chelny (Tatarstan, Russia) 8-y.o. Girl was raped and murdered by the native citizen of Uzbekistan, who was sentenced to life imprisonment. This crime had a wide public resonance: a few days after the crime, the people gathered on the Central square and demanded the public execution of the migrant. They demanded the requirements for tightening policy regarding the migrant workers. In the accusations claimed by indigenous population there was emphasized the ethnic and social origins of the offender.

According to the results of a sociological study conducted in 2013 (1), the Republic of Tatarstan is one of the subjects of Russia with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious community. According to statistical data, in the Republic do live: Tatars - 53,2%, Russians - 39,7%, and other nationalities - 7,1% (Chuvashes, Udmurts, Mordvinians, Maris, Ukrainians, Azerbaijanis). Major part of the respondents (58%) indicated that the nationality of the person is important for the communication, and slightly over one third of the Tatarstan inhabitants (34%) did not pay attention to the ethnicity. Interethnic relations in Tatarstan, according to the respondent's opinion, are more peaceful and harmonious than in Russia in general: 42% of the residents of the republics favorably assessed inter-ethnic relations in Russia and Tatarstan. 63% believe that such relations in the Republic of Tatarstan?. This situation can be explained by the fact that although the RT has a complex ethnic system, the Government of the Republic is

trying to implement balanced national policy.

**Table 1. Regulations regarding the foreign migrants**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
To promote their integration in Russia	92	5,8	5,8	5,8
To allow temporary residence in Russia	683	43,0	43,1	48,9
To prohibite entry to Russia	305	19,2	19,2	68,1
No answer	505	31,8	31,9	100,0
Total	1585	99,7	100,0	
No answer	5	,3		
Total	1590	100,0		

Less than half of the respondents (43%) are not against temporary residence of the migrants, almost 6% believe that the regulations should be based on the principles of assimilation and one-fifth (19%) insist on the prohibition of the migrant's entry into Russia. According to these data, a little less than a half of the respondents wouldn't like to see the migrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus States as their countrymen (46%). The problem of labor migration is perceived with anxiety by almost half of the population of the Republic of Tatarstan. The inhabitants of Tatarstan Republic feel the wariness towards migrants. Regarding the problem of the migration we can't talk about the openness of the society, and also the authorities don't feel responsibility to create certain conditions for the migrants integration. According to the considered cases currently there work only so-called "point measures" to regulate the conflict and there is no systematical concepts for migration policy of the state.

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